

April 16, 2012

News Release

For Immediate Release

Tonight is Opening Night at Miracle League Field

Opening night for the inaugural season at the Betty and Bobby Allison Miracle League Ball Field is tonight, Monday, April 16, 6 p.m. at Dan Kinney Park, 2701 S. Blackman Rd., Springfield. A second game takes place at 7 p.m.

The first youth league game of the season takes place Monday, with the first adult league games following on Thursday, April 19, 6 and 7 p.m.

Miracle League Field was built especially to help players with physical or developmental disabilities to hit, run, catch and play ball. The 1/3-size field features a barrier-free cushioned synthetic surface, easy to maneuver with wheelchairs and walkers and by players with gait issues. Bases are built into the field, dugouts are wider and the entire facility is ramp-accessible. Each Player is paired with a volunteer "buddy" who may assist in hitting, running bases and catching.

"Miracle League Field allows kids and adults of all abilities to play ball without fear of uneven terrain or getting their wheels stuck in the sand," said Sheri Davis, Community Recreations Coordinator for the Springfield-Greene County Park Board's Accessible Recreation program, which manages the facility.

Leagues follow National Miracle League Association standards of non-competitive play, including:

- Every player bats once an inning.
- All players are safe on the bases.
- Every player scores a run before the inning is over.
- Every team and every player wins every game.
- On-field buddies support players.

Games last about 50 minutes and at the end of each game, all players are invited to the field to sing "Take Me Out to the Ball Game."

Miracle League Field opened in October 2011 and is the first certified field of its kind in the region. The first season of league play begins Monday and continues for seven weeks.

The field was built through generous support of numerous donors, including the Betty and Bobby Allison Family, Rotary Club of Springfield-North, Wal-Mart, Ozarks Coca-Cola, St. John's- Mercy, Jack and Fran Hood, Paul Black, James and Jill Lohmeyer, MSU Bears First

Pitch, Wayne and Betty Bessinger, Lost Hill Bluegrass Band, Drury University Baseball, Springfield Cardinals, the Community Foundation of the Ozarks and others.

For more information, visit www.parkboard.org/miracle_field; call Sheri Davis, Community Recreation Coordinator for the Springfield-Greene County Park Board's Accessible Recreation program, at 417-837-5808; or call Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Public Information Administrator for the Springfield-Greene County Park Board, at 417-874-2176 or 417-224-5510.